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U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration & Naturalization Service

PRECLEARANCE

The Logical Choice

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The History of Preclearance

The United States has experienced an increase in international air passengers of over *800%* since 1977. Air arrivals in 1984 numbered *16 million*. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has recognized that competitive airline scheduling of international flights destined for U.S. airports creates peak periods of aircraft arrival, resulting in passenger inspection delays and overcrowded airport facilities.

Preclearance - the inspection of passengers and their luggage prior to departure from foreign airports rather than upon arrival in the United States - was initiated by INS in 1952 in Toronto, Canada, in an effort to improve service to international travelers and reduce congestion at U.S. airports. INS was joined shortly thereafter by the U.S. Customs Service and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Preclearance is now performed at airports in *Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary in Canada, Hamilton in Bermuda, and Nassau and Freeport in The Bahamas.* INS strongly supports opening additional preclearance stations, based on our analysis that preclearance meets the needs of and provides benefits to international travelers, airlines, the travel industry and travel oriented businesses.

Preclearance Avoids:

1. Long waiting lines for Immigration, Customs, and Agriculture inspection at U.S. Airports.

2. Delays in meeting relatives and friends at baggage claim areas.
3. Delays in checking in for connecting flights.
4. Delays in arrival at hotel and resort accommodations.
5. Delays in joining tour groups.
6. The negative and expensive experience of an air traveler who cannot be admitted to the United States and must return home.
7. The need for detaining persons who cannot be admitted, and the necessity for airlines to return them abroad.
8. Poor first impression of the United States formed by tired travelers waiting in long inspection lines.
9. Overcrowding of airport facilities when two or more flights arrive within a short time.
10. Unwelcome changes in lodging, tour, or visitation plans due to inspectional delays.

Preclearance Provides:

1. A more pleasant overall inspectional experience.
2. A "trickle" system of inspection, with passengers appearing for inspection a few at a time, rather than the "surge" system at domestic airports where all passengers from a flight line up for inspection at one time.

3. Attractive flight lounges where passengers may relax after preclearance until time to board their flights. Most facilities have food and beverage service available after inspection.
4. Greatly improved first impressions of the United States.
5. Greater flexibility and convenience in scheduling use of U.S. airport facilities, ground transportation, public transit and other adjuncts.
6. Economy, through centralized inspection, reducing staffing levels and equipment normally required at U.S. international airports.

The Logical Choice is:

P ractical

R esourceful

E conomical

C onvenient

L ogical

E fficient

A daptable

R ecommended

A dvanced

N ovel

C omplete

E ffective

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